

SITUATION REPORT NO. 5
INCIDENT NO. 2003-028
DATE: April 14, 2003 Time: 5:15 p.m.

TO: Governor John Hoeven
State Capitol
Bismarck ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: **Spring Fire Season** – Typical pre green-up conditions exist to provide concern about rural fires.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: At the McLean Bottoms fire, one fire fighter was transported to the hospital on April 10 due to smoke inhalation and several fire fighters have suffered blisters on their feet due to walking on hot embers.
3. DAMAGES: On April 9, a campfire reportedly ignited a blaze on Game Management land one to two miles south of the Glencoe Church in the McLean Bottoms along the Missouri River in north Emmons County. On April 11, the wild land fire was considered contained but on April 12, very strong winds combined with low humidity caused the fire to flare. Over two square miles burned before containment was reached during the evening of April 13. The McLean Bottoms fire is estimated to have burned in excess of 5,000 acres.

More than 50 fires throughout North Dakota were reported to the State Emergency Operations Center on April 11-12-13.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: (In addition to previous reports) Responders included local and rural fire departments, law enforcement agencies, emergency management departments, and ambulance services from Morton, Stark, Grant, Pierce, Sargent, Sheridan, Benson, Logan, Traill, and Stutsman Counties.

STATE: (No change from previous reports)

FEDERAL: (In addition to previous reports) Personnel from the Tewaukon National Wildlife Refuge of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service assisted in fire response activities.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: (In addition to previous reports) On April 13, personnel from the Bismarck Chapter of the American Red Cross provided the evening meal for responders to the fire in McLean Bottoms.
6. MAJOR ACTIONS: On April 10, Governor John Hoeven issued an executive order and proclamation directing all state departments and administrators with fire resources, personnel and equipment to support local response to the Burleigh and Emmons County wildfire event, in conjunction with the State Emergency Operations Plan.

On April 11, a late evening briefing was conducted in the State Emergency Operations Center concerning the McLean Bottoms fire. Reports indicated the fire was 100 percent contained and that demobilization and transition of unified command to the local jurisdiction had been completed. The impact of forecasted weather conditions was taken into consideration. It was pointed out that officials from the N.D. Game and Fish, the Burleigh County Sheriff's Department, and the Hazelton Fire Department would conduct patrols to monitor fire conditions through Sunday, April 13. As a precautionary measure, it was decided to place N.D. National Guard personnel on stand-by through the weekend. The N.D. National Guard surveillance flight on April 11 to view current conditions and to establish GPS coordinates for determining total size of the fire was discussed. Representatives delved into issues involved in determining local, state, and federal cost share. Participating agencies included the N.D. Game and Fish, the N.D. Division of Emergency Management, the N.D. Forest Service, the N.D. National Guard, Burleigh County Emergency Management, Emmons County Emergency Management, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the On-Scene Unified Command.

On April 12, personnel from the Bismarck Rural Fire Department, the Sterling Fire Department, the Wilton Fire Department, Linton Fire Department and the N.D. Game and Fish responded to the large flare-up of the McLean Bottoms fire; members of the Hazelton Fire Department responded on April 13. Containment was achieved during the evening of April 13.

During the April 12 flare-up in the McLean Bottoms, the N.D. Highway Patrol and the Burleigh County Sheriff's Department worked in concert to close N.D. Highway 1804 from 93rd Street to 119th Street for several hours.

Due to safety concerns caused by the fast moving flare-up in the McLean Bottoms, the Incident Commander requested the evacuation of recreation enthusiasts from the boat landing and rifle range. Members of the Bismarck Rural Fire Department and the Burleigh County Sheriff's Department then alerted individuals of the need to leave.

During the morning of April 13, Bismarck Rural Fire Department contracted for a flight over the McLean Bottoms fire to identify hot spots and areas of concern.

N.D. Game and Fish personnel will continue monitoring the McLean Bottoms until conditions indicate no further chance of flare-up.

On April 14, 2003, four rural fires were reported to the State Emergency Operations Center by officials from Cass, Ransom, Sargent, and Sheridan Counties.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No additional assistance has been requested.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No additional outside help has been requested.
9. OTHER INFORMATION: The N.D. Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is <http://www.state.nd.us/dem>.

Douglas C. Friez, State Director